

D804
R9U5
Pt.1

No. *D804.R9U5

pt. 1



PURCHASED FROM

THE KATYN FOREST MASSACRE

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

SELECT COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION OF THE FACTS, EVIDENCE AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE KATYN FOREST MASSACRE

EIGHTY-SECOND CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

INVESTIGATION OF THE MURDER OF THOUSANDS OF
POLISH OFFICERS IN THE KATYN FOREST NEAR
SMOLENSK, RUSSIA

OCTOBER 11, 1951

Printed for the use of the Select Committee To Conduct an Investigation
of the Facts, Evidence and Circumstances of the Katyn Forest Massacre



UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON : 1952

SELECT COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION OF THE
FACTS, EVIDENCE, AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE KATYN FOREST
MASSACRE

RAY J. MADDEN, Indiana, *Chairman*

DANIEL J. FLOOD, Pennsylvania

GEORGE A. DONDERO, Michigan

THADDEUS M. MACHROWICZ, Michigan

ALVIN E. O'KONSKI, Wisconsin

FOSTER FURCOLO, Massachusetts

TIMOTHY P. SHEEHAN, Illinois

JOHN J. MITCHELL, *Chief Counsel*

*D834
R9U5
Pl. 1
copy 2

7/17/53 - jck

CONTENTS

	Page
House Resolution 390, Eighty-second Congress, first session	1
Statement of—	
Stewart, Lt. Col. Donald B., United States Army	2
Exhibits	16, 18, 19, 20, 21
	III

THE KATYN FOREST MASSACRE

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1951

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE
KATYN FOREST MASSACRE,
Washington, D. C.

The committee met at 9:30 a. m., Hon. Ray J. Madden (chairman), presiding.

Present: Messrs. Machrowicz, Dondero, and Furcolo.

Also present: John J. Mitchell, chief counsel.

Mr. MADDEN. The meeting will come to order.

I might mention for the record that this special committee was authorized by Congress to make an investigation of the Katyn massacre but has not been completely organized as yet as far as the office personnel and office location is concerned.

The original intention of the committee was not to start formal hearings until after the Congress reconvened in January.

I wish at this time to state that a quorum is present, Mr. Machrowicz, Mr. Dondero, Mr. Furcolo, and myself, and owing to the fact that this hearing was rather impromptu, Congressman Flood and Congressman O'Konski were unable to be in the city this morning.

I might also state that the committee wishes to thank the Secretary of Defense and the Department counselor of the Army, Mr. Shackelford, and Mr. Pace, the Secretary of the Army, for their cooperation in making available our witness this morning.

The reason for the hearing being called this morning is that our witness, Lt. Col. Donald B. Stewart, was about to be assigned to Tokyo, was leaving in 2 weeks, and owing to the fact that it would cause considerable inconvenience to have the Army return Colonel Stewart next year, we decided to hold this hearing in order to obtain his testimony.

I might also state that Mr. Sheehan, a member of the committee, was also out of the city, and it is hoped that he may be here before the committee adjourns.

Without objection, I will submit for the record House Resolution 390, authorizing the Special Committee for the Investigation of Katyn.

(H. Res. 390 is as follows:)

[H. Res. 390, 82d Cong., 1st sess.]

RESOLUTION

Resolved, That there is hereby created a select committee to be composed of seven Members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker, one of whom he shall designate as chairman. Any vacancy occurring in the membership of the committee shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made.

The committee is authorized and directed to conduct a full and complete investigation and study of the facts, evidence, and extenuating circumstances both before and after the massacre of thousands of Polish officers buried in a mass grave in the Katyn Forest on the banks of the Dnieper in the vicinity of Smolensk, which was then a Nazi-occupied territory formerly having been occupied and under the control of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Upon completing the necessary hearings, the committee shall report to the House of Representatives (or the Clerk of the House, if the House is not in session) before the adjournment of the Eighty-second Congress the results of its investigation and its study, together with any recommendations which the committee shall deem advisable.

For the purpose of carrying out this resolution the committee, or any subcommittee thereof is authorized to sit and act during the present Congress at such times and places within the United States, whether the House is in session, has recessed, or has adjourned, to hold hearings, and to require, by subpoena or otherwise, the attendance and testimony of such witnesses and the production of such books, records, correspondence, memoranda, papers, and documents as it deems necessary. Subpenas may be issued under the signature of the chairman of the committee or any member of the committee designated by him, and may be served by any person designated by such chairman or member.

Mr. MADDEN. Now, the witness we have here this morning, is Lt. Col. Donald B. Stewart.

Colonel Stewart, you have no objection to being sworn, have you?

Colonel STEWART. No, sir.

Mr. DONDERO. Mr. Chairman, just before you swear the witness in, may I just make the statement that Colonel Stewart was my West Point appointee in 1936. I saw him yesterday for the first time in 15 years and was not aware or conscious of the fact that he was one of the two American officers taken by the German army up into Russia to see the Katyn massacre site.

Mr. MADDEN. I might also state that Congressman Kluczynski of the city of Chicago is present at the hearing this morning.

(Whereupon, Colonel Stewart was duly sworn.)

Mr. MADDEN. The committee wishes to thank you, Colonel Stewart, for your cooperation and your willingness to come here to testify this morning, and I might say that you and others who were prisoners of war, at the time of the investigation and the observations that you made at the Katyn Forest, are just a few of the unsung heroes of World War II. The committee appreciates your great record as a soldier and the sacrifices that you have made in the cause of liberty and freedom, not only during World War II but throughout your active career as a military man, and continuing through to the present time.

Would you state your name, please?

TESTIMONY OF LT. COL. DONALD B. STEWART, UNITED STATES ARMY

Colonel STEWART. I am Donald B. Stewart, lieutenant colonel in the Regular Army.

Mr. MADDEN. Where are you stationed at the present time?

Colonel STEWART. St. Mary's University, San Antonio, Tex., ROTC duty.

Mr. MADDEN. For the record, you may state where you were born.

Colonel STEWART. I was born in Detroit, Mich., March 17, 1915. I lived there until I joined the Army.

Mr. MADDEN. Did you attend West Point?

Colonel STEWART. Yes. After enlisting in the Army in 1934 and serving 2 years, I received an appointment to West Point from Mr. Dondero and entered in 1936.

Mr. MADDEN. And after you graduated from West Point what was your assignment?

Colonel STEWART. After 3 months of schooling at Fort Sill, in 1940, I was assigned to the Seventeenth Field Artillery at Fort Bragg. Most of my service there was as a battery commander.

Mr. MADDEN. Just proceed to narrate.

Colonel STEWART. After the unit had trained at Bragg it was transferred around to other points. We went to England in August of 1942 and to Africa in November of 1942.

In January 1943 my battalion was moved up to the front of Tunisia. On the 14th of February 1943 we were hit by a German attack, and on the 15th I and a number of my men were captured while trying to make our way out. I was taken to the city of Tunis on about the 19th. I was flown to Naples, Italy, on the 19th or 20th. We spent approximately 2 weeks at Capau, Italy, before going into Germany. I arrived then at Oflag, IX A/Z, about the 15th of March.

Mr. MADDEN. What year?

Colonel STEWART. 1943. That was the British prison camp, four hundred-odd officers, to which 125 or 150 Americans were added. I was there when I first heard about Katyn in April of 1943.

Mr. MADDEN. Just proceed in a sort of chronological review of what led up to your visit to the Katyn Forest.

Colonel STEWART. The Germans told the senior British officer and the senior American officer that British and American officers would be sent to Katyn as a committee of investigation to judge who killed some 10,000 Polish officers.

Mr. MADDEN. Let me ask you this: How long had you been a prisoner up to that time?

Colonel STEWART. I was captured on the 15th of February. This was the last of April. I had been a prisoner approximately 2½ months.

Mr. MITCHELL. When was that?

Colonel STEWART. 1943.

Mr. MADDEN. 1943?

Colonel STEWART. Yes.

The British senior officer, Brigadier Nicholson, and the senior American officer, Colonel Van Vliet, both protested against any Allied officers being sent to Katyn.

Mr. MADDEN. How far were you from the Katyn location at this time; how many miles, approximately—not exactly?

Colonel STEWART. Roughly, I would say around 900 miles. It could be determined accurately from the map, but that would be a rough estimate.

Colonel Van Vliet and Brigadier Nicholson both submitted written protests to the Swiss, as the protecting power, against any Allied prisoners being involved in this propaganda effort of the Germans.

The Germans told Colonel Van Vliet that he and one officer would have to go. Colonel Van Vliet said that he would go only under guard. He found that he had to go. One other officer had to go. He asked me if I would go with him if it was necessary to go. I told him that I would.

His decision to ask me to go along with him was based on the fact that he knew me because his battalion was in the same location as my battery when we were in combat. I had also had some dealings with him in a prison camp on a matter pertaining to prison administration, and he knew that I was Regular Army. He felt that if an officer was in the Army for the duration of the war and were to get mixed up in propaganda by the Germans, and after the war he came home, some of the people in his home town might believe that he was mixed up in it voluntarily, and some people might hold it against him. He felt that because of our permanency in the Army we would not run into any trouble about people thinking that we were tools of the Germans.

Mr. MADDEN. Let me interrupt right there. Did you receive an order for this trip, a military order, to go?

Colonel STEWART. Yes. After the German camp security officer, Captain Heyl, told me that I would go, we received a written order. We insisted that it be in writing. It was marked "Depruft," meaning "censored," and that meant that it would never be taken from me. He gave me that order. I kept it all through the war, through all the searches that I went through, and no German took it from me. I have that order here. I cannot translate the German very well because I did not like the Germans and I felt that if they wanted to talk to me they could talk to me in English. What it says roughly is that Lieutenant Colonel Stevenson of the British Army and Lieutenant Colonel Van Vliet, American, and Captain Stewart, American, were to go to room 136 at 2145 hours for a search. They would be given rations for 4 days; that on the orders of the Commandantur, Oflag, IX A/Z, these people would go to Katyn by airplane. Then on the back it says that this order would not be taken from the prisoners. They would be allowed to keep it.

Mr. MADDEN. Interrupting you further: What was your rank at that time?

Colonel STEWART. I was a captain, sir.

Mr. MADDEN. Now, would you object to presenting that order, as an exhibit for the purpose of this hearing? The same will be returned to you.

(Colonel Stewart handed the order to the committee counsel. The order follows:)

Abschrift (ausgangswiese)Kommandanter
Offiz. II A/2

Rosenburg/W., den 9. Mai 1943.

Lager - befehl Nr. 11/43.

1) usw.

2) Verlegung (Kommandierung) nach Katyn.

Gemäß GEF-Verfügung vom 8.5.43 über Kgf. werden die folgenden Kgf. am 10.5.1943 nach Berlin in Marsch gesetzt, um von dort aus dem Flugzeug nach Katyn verbracht zu werden:

- a) Oberstleutnant Stevenson Nr. 12883 {Briten}
- b) Oberstleutnant Van Fleet Nr. 1584 {Amerik.}
- c) Hahn, Stewart, Nr. 1581 { " }

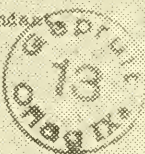
Sie haben sich mit leichtestem Gepäck und einer Decke am 10.5.43 um 21.35 Uhr in Zimmer 135 zur Ausgangsuntersuchung einzufinden. Sie erhalten für 4 Tage Marschverpflegung. Der Transportführer ist angewiesen, den Betrag von RM 50.— zur Bezahlung etwaiger Bedürfnisse der Kgf. während des Transportes mitzuführen. Abrechnung erfolgt nach Rückkehr in das Lager.

gez. Dr. Hermann

Major und stellv. Kommandant

Für die Richtigkeit:

Major, stellv. Kom.



Kr. Gef. Offizierlager II A/2
Der Abschreibeführer.

Rosenburg/W., den 9.5.1943.

Der anstehende Lagerbefehl ist den Kriegsgefangenen, soweit Name in dem Lagerbefehl genannt ist, bei Durchsichtungen zu belassen.

Hauptmann und A.O.



Mr. MADDEN. Clarifying the record, the Lt. Col. John Van Vliet that you referred to is not General Van Fleet?

Colonel STEWART. No, sir. It is V-a-n V-l-i-e-t.

Mr. MADDEN. Where is the Van Vliet that you refer to at the present time?

Colonel STEWART. I understand that he is in Tokyo.

Mr. MADDEN. What is his rank now?

Colonel STEWART. He is a lieutenant colonel, also.

Mr. MADDEN. Proceed.

Colonel STEWART. We gathered our stuff together and went down for our search. They issued our rations, cans of meat and a loaf of bread. We left in the evening. I went to Kassel, where we were supposed to meet British General Fortune.

Mr. MITCHELL. What date was that, approximately?

Colonel STEWART. The night of the 10th of May. The only way that I can be sure of that date is the order says we will do it on the 10th, and we generally did what they said, so I am certain that it was on the 10th of May.

Mr. MITCHELL. 1943?

Colonel STEWART. 1943.

When we reached Kassel, we looked around the railroad station and were surprised to find it had not been bombed.

Mr. MADDEN. When you reached where?

Colonel STEWART. Kassel, Germany, about 25 or 30 miles north of our prison camp at Rotenberg on the Fulda, just a short trip. I was in this prison camp at Rotenberg on the Fulda River. On Sunday night, the 10th of May 1943, we went by train from Rotenberg to Kassel.

Mr. MADDEN. A distance of how far?

Colonel STEWART. Approximately 25 to 30 miles. We were supposed to meet General Fortune, a British officer from another prison camp, at Kassel. He was not there. The Germans put Colonel Van Vliet, Colonel Stevenson, and myself on the train, and we made an overnight trip by train to Berlin.

Mr. MADDEN. How far is that, approximately?

Colonel STEWART. About 200 miles. We arrived at Berlin during the daylight hours of Monday the 11th.

Upon our arrival there we were taken to what the Germans called an arbeits commando, a work camp, an apartment house prison on the Spree River. It was in one of the suburbs of Berlin.

We stayed there that night and found that at this prison camp there were already some men gathered who were all supposed to make the trip. There were several American soldiers. One of them was from Colonel Van Vliet's unit, Taussig. I did not know Corporal Taussig personally, but I had a number of my men captured at the same time. When I talked with him I found that he knew one of my corporals, Corporal Denoid, and that these American prisoners had come from a POW camp in the vicinity [pointing to map]. They had been brought to Berlin to the same camp where we were. There were also British enlisted men present that had come from some camps in Germany that I do not know. There was a British civilian who was an internee, a prisoner of war. This British internee had lived on one of the Channel islands, either the Isle of Guernsey or the Isle of Man. I do not recall which one. All these people had been ordered here to go to Katyn.

The fourth officer, Capt. Stanley Gilder, a Scottish officer in the British Medical Corps, came in from a camp down at Rottweil. We were a little suspicious of Captain Gilder. It turned out that he could speak German and also he could speak a little Russian. As we checked on him we had our confidence established, and we felt that he was really a British officer—as he turned out to be. In a prison camp you are always suspicious of everybody. We do not believe anyone is who he says he is until we can find positive proof that he is. We wanted to make sure nobody was planted on us to listen to what we might say.

Tuesday afternoon, so far as I can recall—and that would be the 12th of May 1943—the Germans held interviews with us in one of the downstairs rooms of the commando. Colonel Stevenson was the senior officer. The Germans usually dealt with a senior officer, and we felt that he should speak for all of us. We had agreed that we would tell the Germans exactly how we felt, that we would not participate in a propaganda effort. However, the Germans wanted to speak to each one of us, and from our conversations with each other later, we found that the Germans had about the same routine.

I was a junior and the last to go down. As I walked into the room there was a mixture of German officers and civilians sitting around a table about the size of the one in this room in a room twice this large. I gave my name and my prisoner-of-war number, KGF 1581. One of the Germans that spoke English very well said, "Captain Stewart, since you have volunteered to go to Katyn and investigate the massacre of those Polish officers, I am glad to see you."

I told him that I had not volunteered; that I was there under orders; that I felt the matter was a propaganda effort and, in any event, it was a political effort. He said it was not propaganda. "We just want to show you the facts." I repeated that I considered it to be a political affair, a political matter. I was in the Army and I had no desire to get mixed up in any international political complications.

Then the next thing he said was, "You are an officer of the Regular Army. Surely you must have an interest in what has happened to officers of the Polish Army."

I told him that I had no desire to have anything to do with a propaganda effort or a political matter. They stopped talking and I saluted and went back to the room. Back in the room the people asked me what I had been asked and what I had said, and it jibed with what had happened to them.

The Germans apparently had asked Colonel Stevenson would he give our parole for the trip, not to escape, from Berlin to Katyn.

MR. MADDEN. How far is that?

COLONEL STEWART. That must be around 700 miles. It is a daylight flight. The exact distance is 600 to 700 miles, so that the total distance from Rotenberg to Katyn is probably 900 miles. Since Colonel Stevenson convinced the Germans we would not give our parole, the Germans said that they would have to send some guards along; therefore, they sent the two American prisoners back to their prison. I do not know why they sent the Americans back instead of the British enlisted men, but they did.

The party, as we finally left for the plane, and the party that visited the graves at Katyn, consisted of four officers: Lieutenant Colonel Stevenson of the British South African Forces; Lieutenant Colonel Van Vliet of our Army; Capt. Stanley Gilder of the British Medical

Corps, and myself. The names of the three British enlisted men and the British civilian I do not remember. So, the total visiting party consisted of eight of us.

In addition to that there were the German enlisted guards, German civilians from the Propaganda Ministry, and some German interpreters, plus a German officer or two. The total crew in the plane was about 20 men.

Mr. MITCHELL. Do you know the name of the interpreter?

Colonel STEWART. He said that his name was Von Johnson.

Mr. MITCHELL. Do you know anything about his background?

Colonel STEWART. He was very pleasant, quiet spoken, and spoke American, not English. He said that he had lived in that part of Germany that after World War I became Poland, and when Poland was established he and his mother left and came to America. He said he spent 19 years in Texas and that he came back to Germany in the late 1930's. I do not remember the reason he gave for saying he came back, but he spoke the American idiomatic language.

Mr. MITCHELL. Was he with you all during the trip?

Colonel STEWART. All the way through. When we left the Arbeits Commando, we got into a bus and drove out to the airport. We stopped at the Ministry of Propaganda and Public Information. That is where the officials of that organization got on. One of them brought a little carton of cigarettes with him. We drove to the Templehof airfield, got on the plane, and we flew, making a stop at Breslau, which is roughly in this vicinity [indicating on map]—apparently just a refueling stop—flew on and made a lunch stop in Poland at a town called Biela-Podlaska. Lunch consisted of a hard-boiled egg, a bowl of soup, and a slice of bread. Then we continued on the flight following the railroad tracks and came into Smolensk—so our flight generally went in this direction [indicating on map]. We got into Smolensk in the late afternoon.

Mr. MITCHELL. Could you see out of the airplane?

Colonel STEWART. Yes. The Germans did not blackout the airplane. For instance, we flew by Warsaw from some miles distant so we could not identify any particular building, but we could see the built-up section of the town and see smoke rising from the chimneys.

As we got further along the old Polish-Russian border, flying along the railroad, every so often on each side we could see entrenchments, shell holes and craters which had been put there apparently when the Germans drove in on their attack on Russia.

Mr. MITCHELL. Did you follow the railroad tracks all the way?

Colonel STEWART. Practically all the way. The plane did not seem to get more than two or three hundred feet above the ground. We were always very low. This country is flat. There were no hills over the area we went through and the plane was always low.

When we landed at the airfield at Smolensk the Germans loaded us into the equivalent of one of our command cars and took us to an apartment building which was still in fairly good shape. Apparently they were using it for barracks, and they put us four officers in one room and the civilian and the British enlisted men in another room with the guard in the hall. While we were in that room we of course could not talk because we felt it might be wired so that anything we would say would be overheard. As a matter of fact, we never talked to each other inside of any room about any matter except the weather.

Mr. MADDEN. Are you referring now to Colonel Van Vliet?

Colonel STEWART. The four officers. We did not talk with the enlisted men except to tell them they were in a tight spot and they must never say anything among themselves or to the Germans that would get them into trouble.

Shortly after we had arrived there, we were put in the room where there was some singing taking place outside. I looked out the window and there seemed to be a company of German soldiers. Captain Gilder, the Scottish doctor, said they were Russians. He had been at a prisoner-of-war hospital, and among his patients were some Russians, so he learned some Russian.

The Germans came over and invited us to go to the officers' mess. As we left our room and went to the other room that was the officers' mess, they asked us if we would like to talk to the Russian soldiers. Nobody did particularly, but Colonel Stevenson asked them a question, so Captain Gilder asked the Russians, "What will happen to you if you are captured by the Russians?", and he was told that they would be executed. We went on to the officers' mess. There the room was about twice the size of this one. It had a couple of tables and a few chairs in it. It appeared to be the dining room of a service unit, or supply unit. At that time the east front was about 40 miles beyond Smolensk. There were no combat troops to speak of in the Smolensk area that we could see. At first the Germans did not talk about Katyn at all. They were just passing the time of day, making themselves interesting and telling us about the Battle of Smolensk and how Smolensk was captured.

Supper was very meager—a piece of cheese and a slice of rye bread and tea. That was it. They gave us the supper they themselves ate. Then after supper they brought out a couple of bottles of some sort of liquor, but we did not dare drink any for fear we might say something.

We returned to our room as soon as we could.

The next morning they loaded us into another command car and took us out to the woods of Katyn. That is about 12 miles from Smolensk itself. I did not see any built-up area around it although there was a village there. All there was, was a small knoll covered with pine woods. The pine woods were not very thick. There were some trees possibly 6 to 8 inches in diameter and a number of smaller trees. It was more like a park land than a forest of woods.

We drove into the area and got out of the vehicles. They took us over to the graves. All this time each one of us was trying to give absolutely no indication by expression that we were interested in what we were seeing.

The Germans were taking movies; they were taking still pictures, and if we looked at anything with too much interest we felt they might make some propaganda out of it. If we indicated too much interest, we felt we would be playing into their hands. We felt this was a German propaganda effort and we did not want to be involved in it any more than they could force us to be.

Mr. MADDEN. The committee will recess for 15 minutes while the Members go to the House to answer a roll call.

(Short recess.)

Mr. MADDEN. Colonel, we will now proceed from where you were testifying when we were interrupted by the roll call, which, I believe, is that you are about to go out to the forest, out to Katyn Forest.

Colonel STEWART. Yes.

Mr. MADDEN. The burial place.

Colonel STEWART. We arrived at this Katyn woods, this pine knoll, got out of our command cars and the Germans escorted us over to the graves.

We passed a couple of soldiers in what appeared to be Polish uniforms, guarding the area, apparently, as a guard of honor; went up to the graves. The smell was pretty bad.

Mr. MITCHELL. May I interrupt for a moment? Were all of you transported together?

Colonel STEWART. I cannot remember; the four of us were in one vehicle. Whether the civilian and the other men with us were in the following vehicle, I do not remember, but I assume they were in two vehicles because those vehicles had only three seats.

Many of the exact details I cannot remember because this occurrence took place so long ago that I have to depend on what my impressions were, and only the strongest, most important impressions stayed with me; details that were not important at the time slipped.

We approached the grave site. This area was sand, a light yellow colored sand, like we find on the beaches of Lake Michigan, and South Carolina; the ground was rather high but just slightly rolling.

We walked over to the graves. There were three main graves open. The largest one was shaped like an L. We estimated individually the sizes of the graves—I have forgotten the exact dimensions now—but I know that they were approximately the size of a swimming pool. There were just three of them, and one was L-shaped, the size of a swimming pool.

As we walked along the edge of the graves, the Germans were giving us a certain amount of explanation.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Pardon me, Colonel, I would like to ask you a question so that we could have an estimate of the size of the grave. It has been estimated by someone that this L-shaped grave was about 30 by 50 yards. Could you tell us whether, to your recollection, that would be close to what you thought the size of the grave was?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir; that would be about as close as I could judge on it.

The Germans walked us along, and showing us the various graves, giving us an explanation of their theories on the murders.

Then, they took us down into one of the graves for a closer examination. We went down the side of the bank and walked across the bodies to see more closely what they were trying to make us look at.

Now, in general, in all the graves the bodies were laid out in rows across the narrow dimension of the grave. Practically all bodies were face down. There were layer after layer; they were practically all headed the same way.

It was obvious that they had not been tossed into the graves from the banks; they had been apparently thrown down in there after they were killed, and then packed in very tightly.

The grave in which we walked, the officers were mostly dressed in overcoats, overcoats of heavy material, a little darker and a little longer than our own. I distinctly remember the overcoats because I stepped on one Polish officer's head, and his scalp came off, and I cleaned my foot on the overcoat of the man next to him.

There were a few men in that grave dressed in the black robes of a Catholic priest.

Individually, we tried to form an estimate as to how many bodies were in those graves. From the surface of the ground to the top layer of the bodies exposed is roughly about my height, which would be 5 to six feet.

Mr. MADDEN. The depth of the grave?

Colonel STEWART. To the layer that was exposed.

Mr. MADDEN. I see.

Colonel STEWART. Then, since one of the graves had been dug all the way down in the ground to the bottom layer of the bodies, we were able to get an estimate as to how many layers there were, so we counted the number of men in each row, we counted the number of layers, and we counted the number of rows individually. Later, when we confirmed, when we checked with each other, we found that we arrived at an estimate of about 10,000 bodies. That may or may not be correct, but our individual estimates were running about nine or ten thousand, based on the calculation of how many bodies in a row, how many rows in a grave, how many layers in a grave.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. I would like to ask you this question: Did you come to any opinion as to how many layers there were?

Colonel STEWART. Yes.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Of bodies?

Colonel STEWART. I counted them exactly then, but I cannot remember the exact number closely. I would say there were five, six, or seven layers, and I could not say how many there were across now or how many rows there were. All I can remember is at the end of my figuring that there must be about nine or ten thousand men in those graves.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. And these layers, were they tightly packed or was there ground between one layer and another?

Colonel STEWART. No ground between them that I could observe. They were just tightly packed. The only dirt that was in between layers or between individuals appeared to be sand that had sifted down.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. There was one body on another?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, packed very, very tightly, like cigars.

Mr. DONDERO. Colonel Stewart, did these men wear boots or did they wear shoes?

Colonel STEWART. In the grave that I walked on, I do not remember. Their overcoats stick in my mind because of standing on it.

After we left that grave, I walked over toward the autopsy table. We went up to a little path where the Germans had already removed several hundred bodies for their examination and reburial. Very few of those bodies had overcoats on, and all of them were tied. Their hands were tied behind their backs with strings, the equivalent of binder cord, sunk into the flesh so that it was obvious that it had been put on when they were alive; it was not a recent addition.

As we walked up to that grave it was not pointed out to us by the Germans, but each of the four officers noted that these men were very well dressed. They had boots on, black boots, of very good leather.

You can look at a piece of leather and you can tell whether it is good or not. Those boots were good. They had leather heels on their

boots, and the leather heels were not worn down; the heels were in good shape.

Most of them were in breeches of elastic material similar to our prewar Army officer breeches. That material was of very good quality and showed practically no wear.

The blouses were darker. Now, when I say that they showed no wear, the material did not look new, but it was not frayed or worn. They were dirty and stained from the graves and from the bodies themselves, but the material was not worn, and the boots were not worn. The clothing fitted; they looked like they were tailor-made clothes. That group of bodies did not have overcoats on, the others did.

We passed those to go to the autopsy table. Now, the Germans had insisted that we point out a body at random in the grave, so Colonel Stevenson pointed to one. They pulled that body out of the grave and brought it to the autopsy table.

They performed the autopsy on it so that we could see what had caused the death, and to show us how they searched each body for purposes—in order to identify it. The surgeon made a circular incision around the head and pulled the scalp off.

The body had in the back of the head—in the back of the head was a smaller bullet hole, and in the front of the head was a larger bullet hole.

The Germans said that practically all the corpses had that same small bullet hole in the back, and larger bullet hole in the front.

Mr. MADDEN. By the front of the head, you mean the forehead?

Colonel STEWART. The forehead on that particular corpse—about right in here [illustrating on own head]. The Germans said some of it was up in here [further illustrating], and various places in the forehead, and the entry was always in the back.

Mr. MADDEN. Right at the base of the skull?

Colonel STEWART. I have a little bump back here, and that was the approximate place of that hole. So that on that particular corpse, the bullet hole probably went in here and probably came up in a slight up path from the rear to the exit. The exit hole was easily identifiable it was a little larger.

The German doctor then gave us a theory that there was some way to determine the length of time a man had been dead by what happened to his bones. He had some theory about the thickening of the bone around the exit hole.

We were not doctors and we could not tell whether there was anything to the theory or not. Dr. Gilder had never heard of it, so he did not know whether there was any truth to it.

Mr. MADDEN. Do you know the name of that doctor?

Colonel STEWART. That would be Dr. Budz.

Mr. MADDEN. How do you spell that?

Colonel STEWART. I am not sure—it is either B-u-d-z or B-u-h-t-h. I never had the spelling to recall. It was just Dr. Budz of forensic medicine, professor of forensic medicine.

Mr. MADDEN. From what university?

Colonel STEWART. Vienna, I believe; I do not know for sure.

After he got through with his explanation and theory, then they performed the examination of the body for identification. The body was in blouse, breeches, and boots, so they cut open the pockets to see

whether there was anything in the contents—any contents in the pockets—and they cut open the side pockets. All they could find on that body was a piece of paper, that I could not have read, anyway, but I don't believe anybody could have read because of the long time in the grave which had made the writing illegible.

They started to remove the boots. They said they always removed the boots and cut them open because the prisoners often had things concealed in them.

They pulled off one boot, and the foot came with it from the ankle on down, leaving the bone sticking out. They pulled off the other boot and it came off, and when they cut it open they did not find anything.

They removed the rest of the clothing from the corpse. The body looked as if it were mummified. The flesh was black and hard, pressed into the bone. It looked as though it had been under pressure for some time, and when they removed the clothing, the body, the chest area, was covered with a liquid that looked like melted butter or light yellowish grease.

Then the Germans said that they took every identification from the body and filed it. Later on they would take us to the place where they kept the records.

Now, the Germans would give us a theory about this or a theory about that. We did not accept them because it would appear to me that we could not prove it. We could not prove anything.

If the Germans would say that, as they told us, no papers or documents had been found on these prisoners dated later than April or May of 1940; there was no way we could check it. We felt that if they did find a document such as that it would be very easy for them just to destroy it.

There were a considerable number of newspapers lying around that they said had come from the grave, a lot of the prewar Polish money lying around. They asked us if we wanted some for souvenirs, and we told them "No."

The Germans said that practically all the bodies were killed by being shot, but that there were a few that they had found bayonet wounds in, and they showed us some material, overcoat material, that had a sort of triangular hole in it, as if it had been made by one of our muzzle-loading rifles with that old-fashioned bayonet, sort of a triangular hole in it, not a straight cut as our present bayonet makes, not a knife cut.

There was a tree there that had possibly a dozen bullets embedded in it. The German officer went over and put his head against the tree and put his hand up behind it to indicate that very probably the persons that had done the killing had made a man lean his head against the tree and then shot him. One of the officers said it could very well have been just somebody doing target practice. However, it appeared to us that the men were shot by a small-caliber weapon.

MR. MADDEN. Pardon me, do you know the name of that doctor that mentioned—did you say that a German doctor told you that or—

MR. MACHROWICZ. An officer.

Colonel STEWART. What was that, sir? There was a British doctor with us, who was Dr. Gilder.

MR. MADDEN. Who was it that called your attention to the fact that—

Colonel STEWART. There were bullet holes in the tree?

Mr. MADDEN (continuing). There were bullet holes in the tree?

Colonel STEWART. That was just one of the Germans; I do not remember which one.

Mr. MADDEN. Yes.

Colonel STEWART. What had happened, apparently the bullet holes were in the tree, and they had peeled the bark away so that you could see the bullets.

Mr. MADDEN. Yes.

Colonel STEWART. They were larger than .22 caliber, but they were not .30 caliber. I do not know the exact caliber, but they were not as big as the .30-caliber bullet.

Mr. DONDERO. Mr. Chairman, if the record shows this, he need not answer it, but if it does not show it, when and in what year and at what time of the year did you actually examine the graves, you and your party?

Colonel STEWART. On Thursday, the 13th of May 1943. It was certainly the second week in May.

At that time the Germans said the graves had been opened a month or more, and they had done some removal of bodies. The weather at that time was getting warm, and the Germans felt that they—they said that they would have to rush the job up before the odor got too bad.

The day we were there started out a sunshiny, rather cool day, and by 10 o'clock or so, when we were at the grave site, it was getting quite warm. I was wearing a blouse and trousers, and I was warm; so it was about the second week of May we were there, 1943.

After we had been around these three graves, the Germans took us through another area adjacent to the woods and showed us where they were hunting for additional graves. They said they were making soundings; I do not know how they made their soundings, but in some places they dug a narrow trench across a clearing, some places they dug a well, a few places they dug these wells down, and they showed us down at the bottom or around the top where some bleached bones and some black rubber overshoes were there.

We looked at those, and they did not mean anything to us because we knew the Germans could have put them there, just as well as anybody else. They might have been real or might not have been.

The graves themselves were in a clearing. The Germans told us that there had been small trees on the top, and they attempted to establish the date by the size of the tree. That did not mean anything to us because you can transplant trees, and besides we did not see the original trees there.

The Germans kept bringing up a number of different points, many of them logical, but there was no one point that they could not have duplicated themselves. Everything they said, "Now, this shows it is so and so"; it could have been very well that they planted that particular bit of evidence.

They brought up a Russian peasant—Dr. Gilder could speak a little Russian, so the Germans asked him to talk to them. The Russian claimed that he had lived in the vicinity a long time, and that this was an area used by the Russian secret police for executions even before the war started. He claimed that frequently truck loads—Dr. Gilder, being British, said "vans"—truckloads of prisoners or people would come from the railroad station into the woods, and they would hear shots and then hear nothing more.

We asked Dr. Gilder what he thought of his testimony, what the Russian said, and Dr. Gilder said that he was untrustworthy; that if you would give him a pound note he would say the opposite thing.

Mr. MADDEN. Who was Dr. Gilder?

Colonel STEWART. Dr. Gilder was the British medical officer, sir. So possibly it could be that the Russian was telling the truth and it could be that he was not. In other words, most of the stuff we saw there—most individual items—could be discounted. But the things that struck us, other than the fact that a large number of Polish officers had been killed, was the fact that many of those bodies, those in the larger grave, were in overcoats and in good condition; Polish overcoats.

We saw several hundred bodies of the Polish officers in uniforms of very good quality that had not been worn.

I was a prisoner myself, and my clothes got worn. Each one of us noted that individually, and the conclusion that we drew from our examination of those uniforms was that those officers could not have been prisoners very long at the time of their deaths.

Mr. MADDEN. Did that same thing apply to the boots, the shoes, too?

Colonel STEWART. The boots; yes, sir. The boots were not worn at all; very little wear on them. They could not have been worn, those boots, very long without showing more wear than they did. They were less worn than the heels on my shoes right now, and those things made a very strong impression on us.

When we left the grave site, the Germans——

Mr. MADDEN. That circumstance or fact regarding the newness of the uniforms and the boots and shoes was not called to your attention by the Germans?

Colonel STEWART. No, sir; we noticed it individually. You see, we did not talk as long as there were any Germans near us, and we tried to keep any expression from being shown on our faces.

For instance, in spite of the stench, we tried to keep from wrinkling up our faces so that they could not take a picture of us and show us expressing disapproval or distaste or something like that.

Mr. MADDEN. Were there any pictures taken?

Colonel STEWART. Yes. The Germans took still pictures and movies, both. They had told us that no propaganda use would be made of these pictures, and so far as I know they did not. However, they did give us a set of pictures to be, as they said, souvenirs; they believed the Americans are very souvenir hungry, and they gave us pictures as souvenirs. I have those pictures.

Mr. MADDEN. Have you those pictures here?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir.

Mr. MADDEN. Would you mind presenting them to the committee counsel and have them used as exhibits?

Colonel STEWART. No, sir. I have seven pictures, of which——

Mr. MADDEN. If you will identify each picture.

Colonel STEWART (continuing). Two are unimportant.

One shows a picture of a typical Russian village, according to the Germans, near Smolensk, and has nothing to do with this.

Mr. MADDEN. That picture will be marked "Exhibit 1."

(The picture referred to was marked as "Exhibit 1," and is shown below:)



Colonel STEWART. Another one shows the picture of the old city wall at Smolensk, which I saw. That has nothing to do with this.

Mr. MADDEN. That picture will be marked "Exhibit 2."

(The picture referred to was marked as "Exhibit 2," and is shown below:)



Colonel STEWART. There is one picture here which shows our party standing on the edge of one of the graves, and it has been taken from the opposite side of the grave. You can see the layers of bodies, and you can see the Germans giving us their explanation or their theory. On the cover I have put down numbers to indicate each person, and on the sheet in front of that, the names of the individuals, so far as I can recall them.

Mr. MADDEN. We will proceed now, and I will ask you if you can give us the names of the persons in that picture there.

Colonel STEWART. In this picture it shows the partially empty grave; a German officer whose name I do not remember, a German interpreter whose name I do not remember; Captain Gilder, British medical officer; Lieutenant Colonel Stevenson, South African Army; Lieutenant Colonel Van Vliet, myself, and in the background you can see some of the British enlisted men, whose names I do not recall.

In the picture itself you can see the bodies in the overcoats, and from the picture you can determine the nature of the soil, which, as I said, is sandy.

Mr. MADDEN. We will mark that picture "Exhibit 3."

Mr. FURCOLO. Might I interrupt for one question? With reference to the writing, that, I take it, is in your own hand?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir.

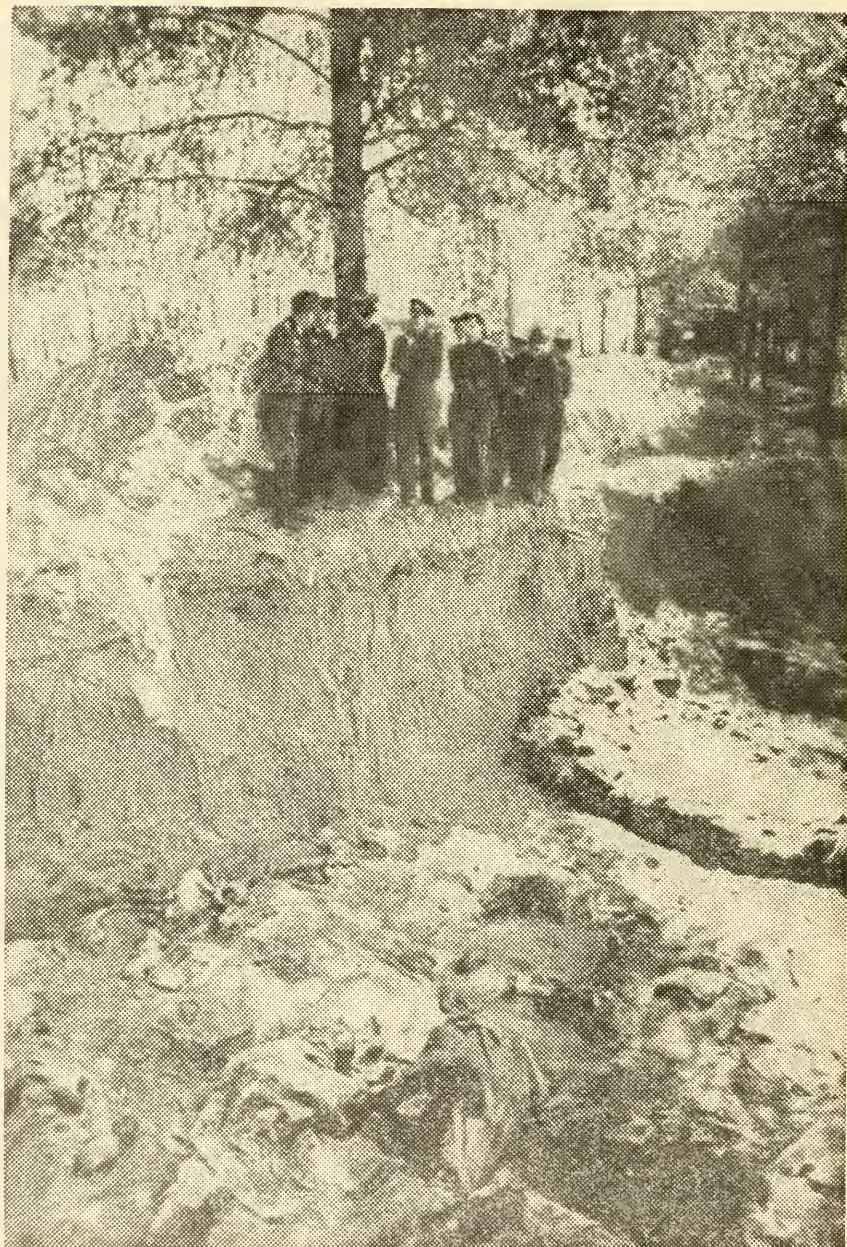
Mr. FURCOLO. On these papers that are appended to each picture, when were those notes made by you?

Colonel STEWART. In September 1950.

Mr. FURCOLO. That would be true of the writing in all these photographs, approximately that time?

Colonel STEWART. Yes; except for Captain Gilder's name, which I just put in. But all the sort of bluish ink was September 1950.

(The picture referred to was marked as "Exhibit 3," and is shown below:)



Colonel STEWART. The next picture shows a part of our party down in the grave, and you can see the corpses in their overcoats.

There is the German interpreter from Texas, Von Johnson; a German civilian from the Ministry of Information in Berlin; Captain Gilder, of the British Army; Colonel Stevenson; and the German

officer who was in charge of the excavation, whose name I cannot recall.

Mr. MADDEN. We will mark that picture "Exhibit 4."

(The picture referred to was marked as "Exhibit 4," and is shown below:)



Colonel STEWART. The next picture shows an autopsy being performed by a German doctor. The people I can identify in it are Colonel Stevenson, Dr. Gilder, Colonel Van Vliet, and in the background you can see a British civilian internee, and a British sergeant, whose names I do not remember.

The corpse on the table is the one that was pointed out at random by Colonel Stevenson. You can get a little idea of the mummification of the body from the picture.

Mr. MADDEN. Mark that picture "Exhibit 5."

(The picture referred to was marked as "Exhibit 5," and is shown below:)



Mr. MITCHELL. Was that the same doctor that you had referred to previously in your testimony—Dr. Budz?

Colonel STEWART. That I do not recall. My impression is that the man performing the autopsy is not Dr. Budz, but he was the one who was put there—this particular one was put there—by the Germans to do the work.

The next picture is a group of us surrounding the table next to the autopsy table, when the Germans were giving us an explanation of their theories as to how the deaths took place.

In the picture are Colonel Van Vliet, Captain Gilder, Colonel Stevenson, myself, two British enlisted men, and the British civilian attorney.

Mr. MADDEN. Mark that picture "Exhibit 6."

(The picture referred to was marked as "Exhibit 6," and is shown below:)



Colonel STEWART. The last picture I have shows Captain Gilder talking to the old Russian peasant who claimed to have known about the closed vans being taken to the Katyn Woods, and hearing the shots.

It shows Colonel Van Vliet, Captain Gilder, Lieutenant Colonel Stevenson, the peasant, a German from the Ministry of Information, and another German whose name I have forgotten.

Mr. MADDEN. I will mark that picture "Exhibit 7."

(The picture referred to was marked as "Exhibit 7," and is shown below:)



Colonel STEWART. You will find me in very few of those pictures, because I was convinced this was a propaganda effort, and every time I saw someone pointing a camera in my direction, I moved out of range or got around on the other side, where possibly my back would show.

I was in only those pictures that I could not avoid, because I did not want to be used for propaganda purposes. The other people were not quite so fortunate.

Mr. MADDEN. When did you get those pictures?

Colonel STEWART. Late that afternoon at Smolensk—either that afternoon in Smolensk or shortly after I returned to Berlin, I do not remember.

Mr. MADDEN. In connection with your statement a minute ago regarding propaganda, after you and the other officers saw these things, did you still think that it was a German propaganda effort or did you change your opinion as to your thoughts when you first went to Katyn after you saw what took place there?

Colonel STEWART. I can best answer that in this way: I was still convinced that the Germans were going to get the utmost publicity and propaganda effect out of these murders. I had formed an opinion as to who had killed these officers. I was convinced they were Polish officers. I thought there were about 10,000. My opinion was exactly the same as the other three officers in the party.

We arrived at those opinions independently because there were too many Germans around for us to talk, and we had to arrive at our conclusions by ourselves because we could not compare notes to talk it over and argue one another into it.

I left Katyn Forest convinced that the Russians had executed those men. I cannot base my decision on any particular fact that would stand up in a court of law, because there were so many things that I knew the Germans could have introduced, or they said this or they said that, and that we had no way of checking, but that massacre, in my opinion, and in the opinion of others, just could not have been falsified and planted.

We did not like the Germans; those who had been prisoners longer had a more intense dislike. The longer I was a prisoner, the more I hated the Germans; and yet in spite of the animosity I had toward the Germans at the end of the war, and in spite of what we have found out about their concentration camps, in spite of everything that I learned about the Germans while I was a prisoner, it did not change that conviction that I formed then, that in this one case—I do not know about any others—in this one case the Germans were not responsible; that these men had been executed by the Russians.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Can I ask a question there?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Could you not tell us what were the reasons that made you come to this conclusion?

Colonel STEWART. After all these years it is a little difficult to pick out the exact reasons. You must realize that any particular minor thing could be discounted, but probably the chief thing that formed my opinion was the condition of the boots, the condition of the clothing, the quality of the material, the fact that it showed no wear, the fact that these officers were in overcoats, that were good overcoats —

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Well, Colonel, for the benefit of those who are not familiar with the significance of that item, will you explain why that item led you to believe that the Russians were responsible?

Colonel STEWART. When my unit was in North Africa, I had a considerable number of uniforms along. When we moved up to Sebeitla, before going into position, I put on a pair of old trousers, older clothes, the first time up in action, because I did not want to ruin my better clothes. I was captured in those, and they wore out.

Now, the Polish Army was hit by the Germans in 1939, and the Russians moved in from the east the same month. The Polish officers had a very distinctive uniform.

At that time I had not seen any Polish officers; later on I ran into some and recognized the uniform as being the same as those at Katyn.

The material was good, and if they had been mobilized, they would go into combat wearing the uniform in which they were dressed. Now, it would be possible for some men to have gone into combat in old clothes; but a prisoner does not have much luggage. Those men were wearing the uniforms in which they were captured. The uniforms did not show the wear that would have been necessary if they had been prisoners from September of 1940 until after the Germans took Smolensk.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. You mean September 1939, do you not?

Colonel STEWART. September 1939; sorry.

The Germans started their eastern fighting against Russia in June of 1941. They had their campaign against the British in May 1940, and it was not until the next year that they went against the Russians.

Mr. MITCHELL. Colonel, could you give us the approximate time that this Smolensk area was occupied by the Russians?

Colonel STEWART. The Russians were driven out of Smolensk in the fall of 1941, and the Germans were holding it in May 1943, when I was there. The Germans lost it that summer, and the Russians were able to retake it in their late summer and fall offensives of 1943.

Mr. MITCHELL. You stated that this territory was occupied by the Russians, I believe, in September 1939?

Colonel STEWART. It was part of Russia.

Mr. MITCHELL. That was the time that the Russians moved into Poland.

Colonel STEWART. The exact date would be in the history books; I do not remember, but the war started about Labor Day of 1939.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. As a matter of record, Colonel, the attack on Poland started September 1, 1939.

Colonel STEWART. And the British entered on the 3d.

Now, it was just those men who were in those graves could not have worn those uniforms more than—without showing more wear if they had been prisoners longer. The uniforms were in too good a shape.

Mr. MADDEN. Do you have any knowledge personally as to whether the Germans ever did use your visit or your associates' visits for propaganda purposes?

Colonel STEWART. When I returned to the prison camp, naturally we kept watching the German papers, and I never heard of any such use, never heard of any newspaper report, magazine article, or radio broadcast in which there was any mention made of our party being up there at Katyn. They did have articles about other people being there, but not us.

Mr. MADDEN. Did you ever make any official report to your superiors on this trip to Katyn?

Colonel STEWART. When I returned to the prison camp we, of course, had written nothing down that the Germans might use, and we told nothing to our other prisoners. It was agreed that at the end of the war, reports would be made to our own governments, and this was in May of 1943.

Colonel Van Vliet and I stayed in the same camps. When the Russians took Warsaw in January 1945, our prison camp of about just under 1,200 officers started out on foot westward. It was quite cold and a number of the people could not make it, so as they could, the Germans loaded them in boxcars and sent them off.

Colonel Van Vliet did not complete the march, and he wound up in a prison camp in Luckenwalde, south of Berlin. I completed the march and I wound up in Hammelberg down east of Frankfurt.

My notes on the Katyn trip had been censored by the Germans and marked "Geprüft," but when I entered that camp and was searched there they took away my notebook. They left me with the pictures, because each individual picture was stamped, and they left me with my orders because that said, "Do not take it." But the notebook they took. I believe they took the notebook because they thought I might have written something else in it, and they wanted to check it.

The Fourth Armored Division sent a company of tanks and infantry in there and liberated the camp overnight, but we were prisoners again the next day. The Germans yanked us out of the camp suddenly, and I never got the notebook back. The pictures and the orders had never left my possession.

Having lost my notes of the detailed names and individuals and times, I would have to rely on my memory. I was liberated in April down near Munich, taken to Lucky Strike near Le Havre, and there I found that Colonel Van Vliet had already checked in. He had gone to Paris, so I did not say anything about this. I knew that he would make the report.

Mr. DONDERO. Colonel Stewart, how long were you a prisoner of the Germans?

Colonel STEWART. Two years, two months, and two weeks.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. And too long.

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir.

When I returned to the States, I did not make a report to the War Department on it because all I could do was confirm what Colonel Van Vliet reported. I knew if they wanted the confirmation they could get in touch with me, and, therefore, I made no formal written report.

Mr. MADDEN. Did you have any knowledge about any report that Colonel Van Vliet made?

Colonel STEWART. I knew that he would make it, and since the matter had international implications, when I ran into him at Fort Benning in April of 1947, I found out that he had made the report.

Mr. MADDEN. Did you know anything about what was in his report?

Colonel STEWART. I do not know any of the details that were in it, but I am sure—I am sure that his conclusions would be the same as mine because they were the same at the prison camp.

Mr. MADDEN. I see.

Colonel STEWART. We did not discuss his report.

Mr. MADDEN. When you were at Katyn, did you notice any other investigating groups around there?

Colonel STEWART. No large group that I would know of. There was a Polish Red Cross doctor, I guess. I never talked to him. I cannot speak Polish. There was no other group there at the time I was there that I recall.

Mr. MADDEN. Some of the records regarding the Katyn massacre state that there were a dozen or more doctors who made investigations there. Would you be familiar with any proceedings along that line?

Colonel STEWART. That took place and was reported in a German newspaper. That would be the only knowledge I would have of it. Now, as to whether it was before we went or after, I cannot recall. I believe it was probably before we went.

Mr. MADDEN. From your conclusions which you have already testified to, you would state—and on what you observed there, you would state—that these bodies were placed in there, considering their clothing and what not, during the colder part of the season rather than the summer months?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir. We were there in May, and it was getting warm. Now, we would not have worn overcoats that day.

Mr. MADDEN. Yes.

Colonel STEWART. They had certain days when it was chilly, but it was beginning to get hot.

Mr. DONDERO. Colonel Stewart, did you have any information that the Russians claimed that these men were buried or killed in the summertime, in August?

Colonel STEWART. I have not done any reading on this——

Mr. DONDERO. You did not hear anything about it there?

Colonel STEWART. I had heard that the Russians refused to participate in any investigation, and later on they made an investigation, but I do not know anything about the details of theirs.

Mr. DONDERO. Was there any evidence while you were looking at the graves that the Germans were reburying these men?

Colonel STEWART. These men were being reburied after they had been exhumed, and the Germans were putting up a wooden cross, a general wooden cross, over the graves. But they were not reburials in that original grave. They had been there a long, long time. The bodies were hard.

Mr. DONDERO. The bodies were hard?

Colonel STEWART. Yes.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Colonel, I might inform you that the claim of the Russians, so far as I know it, is that these officers were murdered sometime about August 1941, while they were working on the road camps. Now, is there anything about what you found that would indicate that this claim is true or false?

Colonel STEWART. Murdered by the Germans on the road camps?

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Yes.

Colonel STEWART. The Germans—I do not know of any cases where the Germans worked officers. It was impossible for me, for instance, to go on a work detail, but I know nothing about that.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Well, wouldn't the fact that they were in winter uniform indicate that that claim had no actual foundation in fact?

Colonel STEWART. The fact that they wore the heavy woolen uniform indicated to us that they had been shot in the winter, or at least

in the cold months of the spring. They would not have been in overcoats in the summer months, not there.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Yes; and I believe it was your conclusion that they must have been killed sometime in 1940?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. And you know, do you not, from what you have since heard and read that in 1940 the Russians were in possession of that part of Poland; is that not right?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir; they were; and the Germans, for instance, told us where the prison camps were located where these men came from—I have forgotten—they told us they found railroad cards with these men's names written on them, and were going home, but I never saw them, and anybody could have written it.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. You actually saw only three graves?

Colonel STEWART. Three graves. Plus these——

Mr. MADDEN. Three mass graves.

Colonel STEWART. Three mass graves.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Three mass graves.

Colonel STEWART. Plus the old circular excavations where they dug up old bones, or said they did.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Were you informed that there were actually found by the Germans seven mass graves there?

Colonel STEWART. I saw a chart the other day; that was the first time I knew of it.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Were you informed by the Germans then that they did find remains of Russian officers from back in 1929 or 1930?

Colonel STEWART. I do not recall being told that. Where these old bones were found, they indicated that those were probably Russians, but they did not put any name or label on them.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. One other question: You did not volunteer to testify here today, did you?

Colonel STEWART. No, sir.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. You were ordered to testify?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Were you instructed by anyone as to how you should testify?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir; to this extent, that I was told to tell what I knew.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Were you told to tell whatever conclusions you arrived at, and whatever facts——

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir; on what I could remember.

Mr. MACHROWICZ (continuing). You saw?

Colonel STEWART. From the time that has gone by. The restriction was not placed on me as to this or that.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. So that these facts that you tell us now are your own conclusions?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Are they at all biased because of any instructions given to you by anyone?

Colonel STEWART. No, sir.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. One other matter: I believe you said that when you left for Katyn you had a preconceived prejudice toward the Germans.

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. That was because before you started out you had the suspicion that the Germans were the ones responsible for this crime, and that they were using this as a propaganda effort.

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir; I was sure of that.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. At that time Russia was our ally?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. And you feel this was just an effort of the Germans to cause disruption among us and our allies?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. However, as I understand it, after your trip was concluded you did come to a different conclusion?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir; I reversed it.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Was that your independent conclusion?

Colonel STEWART. It was the conclusion I arrived at by myself.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Did you, before you arrived at that conclusion, discuss the findings with any of your fellow officers?

Colonel STEWART. We had no real opportunity to discuss it with each other, as a jury might. We tried to avoid anyway all semblance of a jury. There were always Germans around. We did not want them to know what we were thinking; therefore, each of us had to form his own individual opinion. The first opportunity that we had to talk to each other outside of a building, as soon as we began to talk, we found that all four of us had formed the same opinion.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. But the opinion that you arrived at was your individual opinion, not based upon conclusions of anyone else?

Colonel STEWART. Before I found out what the others thought, I had that conclusion.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. One further question: I believe you testified there were some bodies in clerical uniforms?

Colonel STEWART. Yes.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Were those in the garb of Roman Catholic priests, would you say?

Colonel STEWART. They were face down, and were in long black robes. Now, whether they were Roman Catholic priests or another kind of priests, I could not say. I did not see an insignia, only the long black robe, but obviously clerical.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Could you give us any idea as to how many of such bodies you found there?

Colonel STEWART. My recollection is just two or three black-robed-clad bodies scattered around the grave; very possibly they were chaplains.

Mr. MADDEN. Did Colonel Van Vliet keep any notes that you know of?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir. We all kept our own individual notes in a little notebook we had. We were careful to put in there nothing but dates and times and the identification of some Poles who were medical men, and, therefore, registered with Geneva; nothing about opinions or conclusions.

Colonel Van Vliet had the same notes that I had; maybe some of the names were different. I do not recall—I did not read his notes. We checked on the spelling of a name, but that was about all.

Mr. MADDEN. You do not know whether the colonel, Colonel Van Vliet, has those notes now or whether they were taken from him; do you?

Colonel STEWART. I do not know what happened to them, but he would have had them when he returned.

Mr. MADDEN. Is there anything further?

Mr. DONDERO. Colonel Stewart, did you ever see the report of Colonel Van Vliet?

Colonel STEWART. No, sir.

Mr. DONDERO. Of the supplemental report that he made after the original was found?

Colonel STEWART. The only thing I have seen is the press release of last year.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. Has the reading of that report influenced your testimony here to any extent?

Colonel STEWART. It has not influenced the testimony. All it has done is been a refresher as to a few names. You see, it still goes back to this: The decision I reached, I can never forget. My decision was that those men were killed by the Russians while they were prisoners of the Russians. The exact facts that piled up to give me that decision, the details may be a little bit blurry—I remember my decision. I do not remember the details.

Colonel Van Vliet's report helped refresh my mind on a few details, nothing on the decision. Colonel Van Vliet, may I say, is a young officer who is rather brilliant, has a sharp mind, a very quick intellect. He thinks much faster than I do, and he was the one who was always suspecting possible tricks on the part of the Germans.

Mr. DONDERO. Colonel Stewart, then you state for the record that you and Colonel Van Vliet were the only two American officers who actually were on the ground and saw these graves and these bodies?

Colonel STEWART. The only two of whom I have ever heard.

Mr. DONDERO. Colonel Van Vliet is not now in this country?

Colonel STEWART. No, sir; he is in——

Mr. DONDERO. You are the only person in the United States who knows about this personally?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir.

Mr. MADDEN. Are there any further questions?

Mr. FURCOLO. If he has completed his formal statement—if you have completed your formal statement, I would like to ask a couple of questions. Did you finish your statement?

Colonel STEWART. So far as I know.

Mr. FURCOLO. Well, now, during the 2 years or more that you were there, can you tell us as best you can recall when the weather would be cold enough during each year so that you might want to wear an overcoat or heavy clothing in the event that you had any such clothing?

Colonel STEWART. My prison camp from June 6, 1943, to January 20, 1945, was up in Poland, about a hundred miles south of Danzig.

Mr. FURCOLO. Maybe I can expedite this a little bit by asking how far your camp was from the location of the forest itself.

Colonel STEWART. You can see this on the little map.

Mr. MADDEN. I think he covered that in his original statement.

Mr. FURCOLO. Did he?

Colonel STEWART. I spent from June 6, 1943, to January 20, 1945, in a prison camp south of Danzig in Poland. It was near the Polish town of Bydgosser—the Germans called it Romburg.

Now, in this area it is roughly as far north as the Hudson Bay, and very cold in winter. Overcoats were desirable from October to April or May.

This area up here, Katyn, I was in just that one time there in May.

Mr. FURCOLO. To the best of your knowledge and recollection, was anything said about any letters or other papers that were on these bodies that bore any dates?

Colonel STEWART. Yes; but that is another one of those things that the Germans could have taken care of. The Germans said all these newspapers had such and such a date. They said they had letters and diaries all ending in a certain date. All their talks, all their figures, all their dates jibed with the dates that they were trying to show that the executions took place. There was no conflict there, but that is one of those things that they could have said without it being so.

Mr. FURCOLO. Did they at any time show you any of those diaries or any of the letters or any of the other papers?

Colonel STEWART. Yes, sir. They took us to a house between Katyn Woods and Smolensk, and the porch of that house and the front room had showcases in them full of newspapers, letters, diaries, rank insignia, Red Cross cards, exhibits, they said were taken from the grave, and from the odor it appeared as though they had.

The back rooms of that house were the filing—the system in which they took the identification from his body and put it in a file. They told us we could look through any of the files, but I was not particularly anxious at that time.

Mr. FURCOLO. I think that is all I have.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. One question: Do you know what happened with the German movies that were taken there?

Colonel STEWART. No, sir; and they took some from several views around the graves, but I do not know; I never heard of them.

Mr. MACHROWICZ. You never saw them?

Colonel STEWART. Never saw them.

Mr. MADDEN. Colonel, have you anything further that you would like to add to what you have said?

Colonel STEWART. Nothing in particular.

Mr. MADDEN. Well, speaking in behalf of the committee, we want to thank you for your testimony here today, and I believe and hope that the future and the further hearings that this committee is going to have regarding all the essential aspects of this massacre that took place during World War II will show that your testimony is very highly valued.

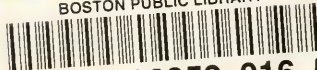
I would like to have the record show that Congressman Sieminski, of New Jersey, was present at the hearing, and also Congressman Sadlak, of Connecticut.

If there are no other questions, the hearing will now adjourn.

(Whereupon, at 12:05 p. m., the special committee adjourned subject to the call of the chairman.)



BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 9999 06352 016 5

